

Tim Freeman, Lisa Stansbie, Rick Niebe and Henry Gwiazda

Short Cuts

Continuing a season of exhibitions investigating parallels between art and cinema, g39 presents a new group exhibition inspired by the film *Short Cuts* (1993). Directed by Robert Altman the film traces the actions of twenty-two principal characters, both in parallel and at occasional loose points of connection.

Short Cuts does not conform to traditional narrative Hollywood cinema, the movie employs a non-linear, dynamic and somewhat negotiable framework of stories.

In the ground floor space is a new body of work by **Tim Freeman**, *Anti-Nature* (2010). This sequence of photographs bear the marks and scratches of negatives that might have lain hidden somewhere for a long time. The monochrome images depict typically pastoral landscapes of hills and valleys, farmland and meadows – but incongruous structures from the city populate some of these landscapes. But while these structures appear out of place and time, they have become intrinsic to their surroundings. The artist presents us with a narrative journey through a linear time line that witnesses intrusions from outside that frame, outside that romantic geography. Freeman is layering experience and memory, fact and fakery to create spaces within spaces and narratives within narratives. In doing so Freeman, like Altman, takes us to a place where the invisible connections and threads that bind a story together are made real and apparent.

Adjacent to this is a video work by **Rick Niebe**, *Private Eye* (2007). A short sequence taken from Howard Hawks' *The Big Sleep* featuring Humphrey Bogart as the noir detective Philip Marlowe. Niebe isolates a particular moment from the original narrative where Marlowe leaves a house but then turns to see someone else leave the house after him. He ducks behind his car as he secretly observes the figure that is following him. It is only then that we realise that Marlowe is being followed by Marlowe who is then followed in turn by another Marlowe. This layering of the same past event into an infinitely extending moment is only prevented by the finality of the movie's end when one Marlowe gets in his car and drives away and we are set free by 'The End'. Niebe creates a tightly edited sequence in a never-ending narrative that is continuously fed by the past and implies several impossible outcomes and eventualities. Like Freeman's work we are offered a multitude of narratives and threads of stories from past present and future that – however implausible and impossible – become real in this work.

On the middle floor this idea continues to a point where linearity explodes into three-dimensional reality. In *Spitfire Beach* (2010) **Lisa Stansbie** takes the dogmatic instructions supplied with Airfix kits and ends with a sculpture and film that defy the ordered kit-building narrative that exists in the plans of each aeroplane. You step outside of this narrative and become tangled in another self-extending moment like Niebe's. Two dominating photographic images show kit structures still attached to their plastic frame. In their unmade state they imply the rigid narrative that we expect to follow. On entering the room we become witness to Stansbie's refusal of that narrative. To one side we see an immediate result of defying the build-by-numbers routine of the original Airfix plan where several kits have been woven together to create a single event, an implosion of histories converging on a single point in time, that has been calmly hung from the ceiling, as we did with these model kits as children. A short film work mirrors this implosion of rational experience and history, where the names of the aircraft become a reality. Hurricanes and Typhoons, Mosquitoes and Spitfires are transformed into places and events that are woven into a narrative that takes place on an impossible shoreline, where a queue of people abandon the mementoes of their life into the sea.

In the next room is the final work in the show by **Henry Gwiazda** entitled *claudia and paul* (2010) showing a series of seemingly banal moments generated using CGI technology. In this world as events happen they are numbered and catalogued. A light comes on, a car passes, the chink of keys is heard. But they are events of little or no importance; they happen, they are witnessed, they are marked as happening at a certain time and place in the world of claudia and paul. It is only when we reach the end of the film that this sequence is intentionally collapsed in on itself. We are given an impossible glimpse into a world where past and future are layered into a single present, where all of these catalogued moments become a choreographed event that belies their mundane origins.

In the works here we are offered the chance, as in Altman's film, to see the usually hidden connectedness between events that are distinct in time and space.